The Fall.

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The Fall.

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Summary

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In a time where the future has brought such absolute ruin that life has been very nearly kicked all the way back to "Medieval Times" in some places, not many luxuries once known as "modern" are left.

In a barely still standing city where the only use the tops of the barely still standing skyscrapers have are for watchtowers for city guards and the bottom levels used for markets and the middle levels are used for housing. There are no cute suburban homes left. No malls that aren't being used as a mix of homes, markets and farming spaces. There aren't many structures from "the before" still standing.. The only actual "homes" that have been added are huts made of debris and rubble that had been scavenged and salvaged from the ruins of the before.

A fourteen-year-old Will Graham lives in a small three room hut made from broken and twisted remains of skyscrapers, watertowers, restuarants and office spaces with his father.

Indoor plumbing is a thing of a nearly forgotten past so Will bathes in what used to be a culvert or ditch but is now a flowing creek.

Will is bathing when his homeland is attacked by strangers on horseback.

Chapter 1

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In a time where the future has brought such absolute ruin that life has been very nearly kicked all the way back to "Medieval Times" in some places not many luxuries once known as "modern" are left.

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A young Omega Sentinel awakes and stretches languidly in his makeshift nest.

There is no finery here.

The nest is on the floor and made from the insides of old stuffed animals and covered with an old piece of fabric.. It isn't much but the young Omega Sentinel doesn't mind so much so long as his is the only scent that exists in this space.

As a Sentinel anything that might affect any of his senses matters in such a profound way that it could mean the difference between life and death for him. So any scent but his own is forbidden from his space.

As an Omega Sentinel he is spared probably some of the only last luxury in the world.. And that is time.

Time to wake fully and get his mind under control so that he can shield his senses and leave his room and start his day.

His greatest problem as of yet is his empathy..

His empathy is a harder thing to keep shielded and people's thoughts and emotions slip through and he finds himself thinking like them, feeling their feelings.

He slips out of his room. Just outside of his bedroom door a mix of his own scent and his Mundane Beta father's scent washes over him.. His father is in the kitchen making vegetable stew in a cast iron pot.

"Good morning Will." His father says from the stove and looks up "hand me that garlic would you?"

Will nods and passes his father a clove of garlic which is pressed into a mincer then added to the soup.

"It smells good." Will comments.

"It's the garlic. Had to add two cloves before this last one to cover the flavor of the carrots, they've gone off, had to cut away bits of some kind of rot in them."

Will gives a thoughtful hum and wisely doesn't comment that it was the smell of rot to which he had been referring. His father might think him odd if he admits that he basically enjoys the smell of something rotting or dead. With Will being a Sentinel his sense of smell is amplified and he can smell an underlying garbagey smell clinging to the celery, the carrots apparently not the only thing to have gone off. Oh well. When there's only barely enough food for just one meal a day food can't be wasted. And Will doesn't mind the taste of an earthy spoiling rot, but of course he'd never admit it out loud.

"Have you shielded enough to venture out to the market?" His father asks.

Will shakes his head "I was going to slip out back to meditate."

"Well if you catch anything that isn't mutated to hell and back bring it in and we'll see about some fish and fried potatoes for tomorrow's meal.

Will doesn't tell his father that there's rot in the potatoes too.

Will's version of meditation is fishing.

He fishes in what used to be a culvert or ditch but is now a flowing creek.

Most of what Will catches is mutated and inedible and gets bludgeoned with a heavy rock so that it can't breed and make more of its mutated inedible kind. Will tells no one that he blugeons most of his catches. He tells no one that he revels in the silent gaping gasps of a fish out of water trying to find air, that he delights in the crunching cracks of breaking and splintering bones, that the smell of death creates a clawing beastly hungry fire in his belly.

When he leaves the creek around noon, he leaves empty handed. There's a patch of grass that is wet and slimy and tinted red with blood and the bloated corpse of a three headed fish floats down the stream, it's oily blood trailing in its wake.

He has "meditated" enough that he can venture to the market for his father.

He collects the items to be bartered from his father then goes out trying to trade for carrots and celery that don't smell of rot.

The thing is. Will's senses and his empathy scares people. It makes them wary of him like it's somehow his fault that he can read people like an open book.

Due to how people perceive him Will and his father gets the worst of the slimmest of pickings no matter what it is they have to trade. The people at the markets are selling vegetables filled with rot to Will and his father on purpose.

Will grins and bares it pretending like he doesn't know. He'd be burned at the stake or worse if they all knew the truth about him.

He carries his purchases home. His head hurts and he is close to Zoning because too much input from too many minds that all think the same nasty things about him and his dad.

He smiles at his father when he returns and they both pointedly ignore the smell of rot on these newly purchased vegetables but for different reasons. Will's father pretending that he doesn't know they're being treated like this on purpose and Will because he doesn't want his dad knowing how much he likes the smell.

Ever since Will Presented the town has treated Will and his father more and more like outcasts. It's why Will and his father live in a hut made from old pieces of cubicle, old restaurant booths, and framed by an old water tower and held together by ruins of old fallen skyscrapers. Their home is more on the edge of town than most while most everyone else has the good fortune of residing safe in the mid-levels of the still standing skyscrapers. The only others who live in huts are those who have the misfortunes of sharing designations close to Will's, either Sentinels or Omegas but Will is the only one that is both.

Will goes to bed with the stew warm in his belly but unfilling because it is always going to be missing something. But the taste of rot on his tongue makes up for the unsatiated hunger as he drifts off.

He dreams of fire glowing in red eyes, reflecting a scene of bodies writhing and burning. He can almost hear their screams.

He awakes to a new day and he is starving.

He has to take a little bit longer to get himself together for the day.

Indoor plumbing is a thing of a nearly forgotten past so Will bathes in the same area that he fishes.

He slips out of his hut and goes to the creek.

Will is bathing when his homeland is attacked by strangers on horseback.

Chapter 2

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As something of a customary tradition, Omegas are given a soft white sleep shirt that hangs to right about their ankles, upon Presenting as an Omega. It's supposed to be oversized and grown into over time to hang close to the knees once an Omega is fully grown. Something to show the transition of where they started to how far they've come..

No one knows how or when the tradition began or how or when it became so ingrained in the culture of this now new world that it became a custom.

But somewhere along the way as the world made its way into this new, barely functional thing it became tradition and custom, it was ingrained in the culture now. Now it was something that always happened without fail.

Someone Presented as an Omega they were given a soft white sleep shirt.

Will's was gifted to him by his father who had painstakingly stitched the fabric together himself, the Mundane, Beta Man's hands more used to tasks involving machinery and only knowledgeable in one type of thread work, mending fishing nets.

So the stitching of Will's sleep shirt was sloppy and haphazard, but it was done by his father's hand and it was stitched together with love which was well worth more than something made with perfect precision craftsmanship that could be gotten from someone that could actually sew.

If it were a normal day, Will would normally silently, secretly treasure this one thing above all of his possessions aside from perhaps his nest which he had made with his own hands and existed to be solely his own space.

But it was not a normal day and Will wished he could go back in time and gut the person who thought it was a good idea to make the sleep shirts white. Something to do with purity and piety Will was certain.

White was not a good color to be wearing for someone trying to remain unseen.

Also not a good color to be wearing whilst still soaked to the bone from a bath.

The fabric didn't take long to become transparent in the most inconvenient places. Nothing was hidden, especially not Will in the nearly glowing white standing out amongst the browns and greens of the overgrown grass and brush along the creek.

There was mud on his hands, knees and feet as he crawled along the bank of the creek. Mud was getting on the bottom of his sleep shirt. All the years he has had it, he had kept it pristine

in it's pure white color. He had always been delicate with it when laying it at the side of the creek when going in to bathe. Of course he had taken care of it. The fabric that it was made of had come at high cost and it was one of his most treasured possessions. It was one of three things he actually valued in his life.

This was the first time he had ever gotten it dirty and now it might be forever ruined. Stained with mud and grass.. Snagged on brambles and twigs and rocks. Fibers worked apart and frayed by grits of sand..

He could feel the minds around him. Some panicking, frantic, afraid. Screams cut short. Lights snuffed out. People dying. He could feel it like flames licking deliciously into his soul, that hunger that burned within him becoming an inferno, but the deaths he felt were only a hollow satisfaction not quelling his hunger fully, only like an unfilling snack after not eating for weeks.

Will hungered.

He could feel the glee of the riders on horseback as they ran down people of the village where Will had lived. The fires it stoked inside them caused the infernos from their souls and minds to rage within Will's too. The fires didn't burn him but one did have a painful scorch as it burned and cut at him.

He felt his father's pain and fear and then like a bolt of lightning, in a flash, his father's mind was silent, the existence of his soul had disappeared. Struck silent, struck down.

Feeling his father's life ripped away, the one bond with Humanity he cherished, the only person he loved in the whole world, made tears come to Will's eyes.

He was in the mud on his hands and knees with tears in his eyes as it started to rain. The overcast sky made it as dark as dusk despite the sun had only began to rise a handful of minutes ago.

His father was dead and the one thing he had left of him was muddy and had rips in it and he was crying quietly as he crawled trying to get to the treeline. He could feel sick, cloying joy at lives taken, slimy creeping lust at dark thoughts of young ones snatched up to be used in horrible and horrific ways and Will knew what would be done to him if he was caught as he was not only young but he was a Male Omega which was the type of delicatessen that these raiders and pillagers craved.. He shuddered to think what would be done if it was discovered he was also a Sentinel..

He was along the ravine crawling, crying quietly and for once in his life afraid, afraid because he knew the minds of the raiders that were burning his homeland and killing nearly everyone in the village.. And then there was a large hand under his midsection hoisting him up into the air, hauling him off the ground in one swoop.

Will's legs began kicking wildly, his arms flailing, his hands clawing. He was trying to fight his way free.

He was held with his back to a broad chest. One large hand was pinning him in place even as he struggled, the man was clearly strong and built with defined muscle. Will wasn't just blindly and wildly fighting, he was also crying, angry and hurting, his father was gone and Will had a wrathfull angry hunger inside him that needed to be fed over the wrong that was done to him and he did feel like he had been wronged, he felt like he had been betrayed on a soul deep level as something inside him snapped into place.. Despite not ever having met this large stranger holding him, he did know the man, probably more deeply and intimately than he ever knew anyone.

The stranger holding him was the reason Will's soul sang with a deep hunger for unspeakable things.

For what was a Sentinel without a Guide?

Chapter 3

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"Shhh.. Little One.. Quiet now.." Warm breath tickled over his shoulder and against the back of his ear, skating along the side of his face like an invisible caress against his cheek.

Will screamed.. A frightened, frustrated sound then.. "You killed my father!" He roared.. He was terrified and felt betrayed, the bond that has been locking his soul to the soul of this stranger since Will could first remember felt wounded because his Mate was a part of the Raiding Party that has killed his father and now his Mate seemed to not be above taking him captive and do probably even worse things than that because Will could sense the dark desires of his Mate's mind, sense his Mate's dark lusts and it hurt to know that someone who was supposed to be his Soulmate would not be loving or gentle or kind to even his Mate all Will could think of is how horrible his life would be from now on with such a horrible Mate that would be party to killing the father of a Mate, party to taking a Mate that was underage with obvious desires of taking that underage Mate sexually and even do it with the Mate being unwilling.. The knowledge of what his Mate was probably going to do to him caused feelings of betrayal to bring a burning chill to his soul..

"No little one.." The man husked in a feather light whisper.. "My soul is dark and lusts to cause pain.. But not to you.. Never to you.. You will be cherished and kept safe the rest of your days.."

"But my father.." Will cried in an equally quiet whisper..

"It was not my hands that took his life.. I had Commanded that your father be kept alive and safe along with the innocents in this place.. But someone disobeyed my orders.. I will see to it that those that dared disobey me see that darkness in my soul that you so fear and Little One they will suffer greatly for the wrong that was done to you.. My sweet little Mate.. I do have love in this pitch black soul.. I do have kindness in this soul that loves to torture.. I do have light in this soul that longs to feed on Live Human Flesh.. But Oh... Little One.. All of the good things inside me belong only to you.. Will be seen only by you.. To me.. You are the only living thing on this planet that I do not see as Prey.."

"You said the innocents would be kept safe.." Will whispered.. His struggles had stopped and he was now on a saddle in front of his Mate and they were now riding at the front of the group.. The fight had gone out of him but the sharp edges of fear remained..

"When we raid I never allow any innocents to be harmed.. Yes.. I do know the dark minds and the dark lusts of the other men but I command with an iron fist.. Those that disobey me get made into an example at every turn.. I command innocents to be taken with us but they will remain unharmed .. I command these things in deference to my Mate.. Oh my small lovely Mate.. Did you think that you were alone in your ability to sense my mind from even afar?.. No Little One.. I too could sense your mind from afar and could feel the desires of

your soul the same as you could feel mine and despite having never met you, I knew you would be displeased with me should I allow innocents to be harmed.. And I know you are angry with me.. Displeased with me over the death of your father and you are right to be for I command these men and their blunders are my blunders even when they disobey.. Especially when they disobey for it makes my ability to command appear weak.. Which is why those that disobey must be made into an example.. A painful reminder of what will happen to others that might choose to disobey.. I know it will take time to earn your forgiveness and trust My Small Mate.. But I hope that you will see in time that I will do right by you.."

"Why now?.. Why come for me now?.. When I'm only still a child? Why raid my village at all?.. Why not just come to my home and ask for me and leave my village in tact?" Will asked..

"I come now because as an Omega your first True Heat will soon be upon you and you would not survive without your Soulmate present.. We came into your village.. I was going only to retrieve you and your father and take you both to my village where you would both have a better life and both be treated better and respected more than you were in your village.. But the bigotry against you and your father. I could not stand for it.. There was an altercation and others in the village got involved.. They didn't deserve to live .. Not after how they treated you.. Not after the things they said about you when I said that I was your Soulmate.. Your father was never meant to be harmed.. I gave that order myself.. But someone in my group started raiding and pillaging.. Several people that should not have been harmed were killed and the people who disobeyed my commands will be punished.. "

"What about the children.. The Omegas?.." Will asked.

"I think rape is a very despicable act.. And yes .. I know it was something you feared but were too afraid to give voice to for fear of speaking it into existence or giving ideas.. The Omegas will be kept safe and will be able to chose their own Mates and where they live or where they want to go.. We don't sell Omegas into slavery.. The children will be raised by various people in a village that neighbors mine.."

"The minds of your men.. They're evil.."

"Yes.. But so long as they obey me.. Then their darkness suits me.. For it is darkness that I can control.. If any of them act on their own dark desires then I show them and all others why doing such a thing is a very bad idea."

"I don't even know your name.." Will stated..

"I am Hannibal.. And you are my Mate.. My equal.. And as such only you are permitted to call me by my name or any other name you may chose as I know right now in your mind you have named me a Bastard.. Others in my land call me King, Alpha or Master.. And would never dare use any other words to speak to me or of me.. You are perhaps the only being that will be permitted to bestow upon me any words of your own choosing and call me by any name you wish.."

"My name's Will.... I have questions.. What if we have children?.. Will they have the same mercies you grant me?"

"I grant you nothing Will.. You are my Mate these things have always been yours since the beginning of your existence and will always be yours long after we are both gone.. Children?.. I believe there is enough goodness inside me to share with them as well.. I think that if you care for them then I will be able to also care for them.."

"But you don't know?"

"One can never know the future and can only speculate on potential hypotheticals.. Like if you should bear twins one day.. I could despise one child but adore the other.. But I can promise this... They will never come to harm by my hand nor by my command... Any children you give me.. I might not always be able to love them.. I am after all a Sociopath with no real ability to love hardly anyone other than the Soulmate made especially just for me.. But I believe that since they will come from you that some part of me will love them because they are a part of you."

"Do you?.. Do you know?.. That I'm not just an Omega?.. Do you know?.. That I'm also a Sentinel?"

"Oh sweetheart.. You are much more than that.."

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